

Segue Institute for Learning

Where All Students Are At Promise

Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 11, 2013, 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Board Members Present: J. Cohen, N. Hoffens, V. Ibarra, D. Rathier, L. Rios (Chair), J. Setaro

Board Members Absent: L. Schechtman

Staff Members Present: M. Ackerman, M. Lourenco, A. Manocchio

Approval of Minutes

- Minutes for the February 18, 2013 meeting were introduced by L. Rios (Chair).
- V. Ibarra motioned to approve the minutes. D. Rathier seconded the motion.
- It was decided that last names needed to be used more consistently in the body of meeting minutes, not just for attendance purposes.

Presentation from Melissa Lourenco, Director of Academic Supports

Mrs. Lourenco reviewed the Segue Institute for Learning NECAP results from the Fall 2012 test cycle. This was the same presentation that was shared with parents at a parent meeting on Tuesday, March 5.

- **Key Points:**
 - Current 8th grade students demonstrated a 12 percentage increase in reading scores and a 9 percentage increase in math scores from their 2010 test results as 6th grade students, showing tremendous growth.
 - From the 2010 NECAP administration to the 2012 NECAP administration, Segue scholars closed the proficiency gap between Segue and the Rhode Island state average by 7 percentage points in reading and 11 percentage points in math.
 - Looking only at Hispanic students, Segue 8th grade students out-performed the Rhode Island state average in reading and writing and scored nearly identically to the state average in math (but slightly lower). Looking at only English Language Learners, Segue 8th grade students similarly out-performed the Rhode Island state average in reading and writing and scored just under the state average in math.
 - Segue scholars, averaged across all grade levels, also out-performed the sending district across all three test areas (63% proficient in reading compared to 39% from the district school, 39% proficient in math compared to 26% from the district school, and 59% proficient in writing compared with 27% from the district school).
 - Writing is integrated throughout the Segue curriculum and scaffolded vertically.
 - Segue IFL takes into consideration testing needs of students when administering the NECAP exams (example: just because two students are scheduled for the same first period class doesn't mean that it is good for either of them to test together in the same room for a prolonged time period, which might necessitate test room reassignments).
 - Segue IFL has taken steps to help parents understand their children's stories of progress as students with respect to the NECAP assessments.

- **Questions:**
 - V. Ibarra asked Mrs. Lourenco about the apparent slump in NECAP scores for the same cohort of students between 6th and 7th grade, and whether this was a common trend across similar charter schools and districts or if this was unique to Segue. A suggestion was made to gather information from other charter middle schools for comparisons.

Presentation from Ann Manocchio, Director of Finance/Operations, on behalf of Angelo Garcia, Founder/Head of School

- **Building and Grounds**
 - Segue IFL has filed a Stage 1 application with the School Construction Program, part of the Office of Statewide Efficiencies at the Rhode Island Department of Education in consultation with Mr. Bahry (independent contractor and volunteer building consultant). Heat, the HVAC system, mold, and the roof have been identified as the first key priorities. RIDE will review the application and respond with any questions. This application will eventually be presented to the Rhode Island Board of Regents.
 - The Gates Foundation has awarded \$10 million to Civic Builders to establish a school construction fund in Rhode Island, which will serve as a revolving loan program for school construction and renovation. Segue IFL was the site of the press conference.
- **Professional Development**
 - The annual conference for the Rhode Island League of Charter Schools is on Tuesday, March 12, 2013 at the CCRI Knight Campus in Warwick, RI. Segue IFL teachers will be presenting workshops and all staff will be attending. Mr. Matt Plain, legal counsel for Segue IFL and the League of Charter Schools, will be presenting on board legal responsibilities.
 - School will be closed for students on Friday, March 15 for a professional development day for staff. Segue IFL will be using the “Each One, Teach One” model for
- **Staff Evaluations**
 - Segue IFL has nearly completed the process of teacher evaluations (conducted by Mr. Garcia, Ms. Boule (Educational Consultant), and Mrs. Lourenco). Non-instructional staff evaluations are next. Segue IFL is attempting to use the same RIDE educator evaluation model for all staff.
- **Segue IFL Applications and Lottery**
 - Segue IFL lottery was scheduled for March 1 along with all other charter school lotteries in Rhode Island. In the end, 76 students applied for the 80 available spots in the incoming 6th grade class, so no lottery needed to be held and all 76 applicants were admitted. It is expected that the remaining 4 spots will be filled by the summer.
 - There are no openings for the rising 7th grade class, only spots on the waiting list.
 - There are 3 open spots in the rising 8th grade class, but it was decided not to enroll new 8th grade students into such a nearly-full class on account of the difficulty inherent in norming students to a new school during their last year in the building.
- **Key Questions**
 - No questions were asked of Mrs. Manocchio beyond clarifications.

New Student Admission Policy –Board Vote

- J. Cohen noted two grammar errors on page 1 of the document – misused possessives – and asked that they be corrected to ensure clarity. No other changes or edits were identified.

- L. Rios (Chair) motioned to approve the New Student Admission Policy with the effective changes requested by J. Cohen. D. Rathier seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

New Board Members – Discussion

- **Member Updates:** Dr. M. Oszman has formally stepped down from the Board and is no longer serving. He remains supportive of the school and is interested in serving the school on an academic or curricular advisory committee when it is formed.
- **Two Potential New Members – Discussion**
 - L. Rios (Chair and member of the Nominating Committee) has been in contact with two of the candidates whose names Mr. Garcia brought forward to the Board in January for consideration as members. Brief information is below:
 - **Jessica Brown:** Central Falls resident and parent of current Segue IFL students in 6th and 8th grade. Very interested in joining the Board, serving on subcommittees, asking good questions, and supporting the school.
 - **Tia Ristaino-Siegel:** Central Falls resident for over 10 years. She is a member of the Central Falls Leadership group and was a candidate for mayor in 2012. She serves on the board of the Adams Memorial Library in Central Falls and is a member of the Prevention Coalition and the Central Falls Crime Watch Group.
 - J. Setaro asked about other strategies to engage Segue IFL parents in the work of the board, and changing the culture around parent engagement at the middle school level, and proposed ConnectEd telephone calls home to families in advance of Board meetings.
 - J. Cohen asked questions regarding the professional backgrounds of both candidates.
 - Regarding future candidates, J. Cohen proposed advertizing on IdeaList.Org and the Volunteer Center of Rhode Island at Serve Rhode Island.
- **Two Potential New Members – Vote**
 - L. Rios (Chair) nominated both **Jessica Brown** and **Tia Ristaino-Siegel** as new board members. J. Setaro seconded the motion. N. Hoffens, D. Rathier, L. Rios, J. Setaro voted in favor of admitting both to the Board. J. Cohen and V. Ibarra abstained.

Board Member Succession Planning and Committee Policy– Discussion

- L. Rios (Chair) reiterated that she intends to step down as Board Chair and will soon step down from the Segue IFL Board. J. Cohen proposed that rather than identifying as a Chair one of the few members who will be remaining next year but will be stepping down shortly thereafter on account of expiring terms, that the Board consider recruiting a prospective and willing Board Chair from outside the Board, and bringing that person on for six months as a voting member starting in July, 2013 while L. Rios continues to serve as Chair for an additional six months for transition and continuity, after which the Chair designee would assume leadership as Chair in January, 2014.
- L. Rios noted that not enough people are currently serving on the Nominating Committee. N. Hoffens and J. Setaro volunteered to join the Nominating Committee.
- J. Cohen volunteered to lead a Board worksession around committee planning and Board policy at a date and time to be determined. N. Hoffens and L. Rios (Chair) volunteered to support. The first two meetings will take place before the end of the school year.

Name Change and Executive Committee Roles

- **Name Change Background:** Officially changing the name of the 501(c)3 organization from Cowden Street Collaborative, Inc. to Segue Institute for Learning, Inc. requires filing Articles of Amendment with the Rhode Island Secretary of State. The Articles of Amendment require the signature of a President or Vice President and a Secretary or Assistant Secretary. The Articles of Amendment cannot be signed without a Secretary.
- **Secretary Nomination:** L. Rios (Chair) nominated J. Cohen to serve as Secretary. N. Hoffens seconded the motion. The nomination of J. Cohen to serve as Secretary was approved with no objections.
- **Articles of Amendment:** The Segue IFL Board previously voted in favor of changing the name of the 501(c)3 organization from Cowden Street Collaborative, Inc. to Segue Institute for Learning, Inc. L. Rios (Chair) and J. Cohen (Secretary) signed the Articles of Amendment to begin that processes.

Announcement and Request from Ms. Ackerman, 7th Grade Science Teacher

- **Situation:** Ms. Ackerman has arranged a field trip to the Mystic Aquarium for the entire 7th grade. The entire trip has been funded through grants except for the bus to transport the students. Ms. Ackerman has partnered with the Family Engagement Team to use the money from the March 30 Indoor Yard Sale to subsidize the rental of one or two school buses to transport students to Mystic, CT.
- **Request:** Ms. Ackerman is requesting that Board Members bring in any unwanted household items, clothing, or jewelry in good condition to Segue IFL in advance of March 30 for the Indoor Yard Sale. Items in particular need for donation include kitchenware, clothes, and beds. Donations will be accepted on all days, but Wednesday donations are most encouraged if possible.

Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Minutes approved on:

Date

Lucy Rios, Board Chair

Date

Jesse Cohen, Board Secretary